

**Attachment to Draft EIR Comment Form
Proposed Las Pilitas Quarry Project**

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Comments opposing the quarry

I am greatly concerned with the lack of overall observation on the part of those responsible for the Environmental Impact Report. The report did not address some key concerns regarding the use of Hwy 58 as a main entrance and exit point for the quarry.

The first concern is for the many bicyclists that use Hwy 58 as part of their training routes. There can at times be many dozens or even a hundred cyclists on the road. They will typically be in groups of 5 or more along Hwy 58, and onto Park Hill Road. These cyclists usually ride single file, but just like automobile drivers, they will pass slower riders. The scenario of a cyclist passing another, with a car approaching from one direction and a transfer trailer truck, full of gravel, approaching from the other, is just plain dangerous. Yet this scenario will likely be repeated several times a day. I don't care how careful they drivers CLAIM to be, it is not uncommon for them to swerve into the oncoming lane to avoid the cyclist, putting them in head on situations with other vehicles. Even if the truck does not, often times the autos will, out of fear of making contact with the cyclist. This hardly seems to support the "Share the Road" signs all along Hwy 58, placed there by the state or county.

Residents of Park Hill Road, of which I am one, will be forced to follow behind extremely slow trucks exiting the quarry. They will be loaded heavy and climbing a steep hill immediately after exiting the quarry driveway. There is not ample space for a safe approach from the east, for west bound travelers. With a speed limit of 55 mph in that area, auto drivers will be forced to break hard to avoid the sudden appearance of a transfer truck entering Hwy 58.

Yes, Hwy 58 is a state highway, but it is not a typical highway either. There are signs warning that long trucks are not recommended on Hwy 58, and for good reason, it is too windy and twisty for safe travel of long trucks. That section from Pozo Rd, has been applied to receive a "scenic" status from the state, and it deserves to be such. I have no doubts the only reason it has not been done already, is it is being held up to allow this quarry to open, in which case it will never receive the scenic status, because the quarry will destroy that look.

We already have a quarry in that area, and they have an entrance off El Camino Real, north of Hwy 58. With the load the high number of quarry trucks will put on the highway, plus the trucks from the in progress construction of the solar project, and the

additional auto traffic as well, the damage to Hwy 58 will be unprecedented. Costs to the state and county will be very high.

If the county chooses to ignore the concerns of the citizens of Santa Margarita, and the surrounding areas, then they MUST insist they use the existing entrance/exit along El Camino Real. In truth, there really is NO GOOD PLACE for this many trucks daily to travel along Hwy 58 or even El Camino Real.

The EIR also does not address the already approved, 100+ homes to be built on Santa Margarita Ranch, that will also use the same route. This will add even more congestion to what will soon become an over crowded route. I know there have been numerous complaints and concerns regarding the children going to and from Santa Margarita Elementary School, and the quarry proponents have stated they will alter their schedules, but that will only last a short while. If they start increasing the number of trucks, which they will, then their schedule will no doubt change. This will create an unbelievable, and unnecessary, gridlock at that crossing.

There is only one reason this quarry is being proposed and pushed so hard upon the citizens of this community, and that is money. There will only be about 10 full time jobs created from this quarry. Those 10 jobs in no way offset the cost and inconvenience this will cost this community. Nor does the EIR address what the loss of revenue will be to the town of Santa Margarita. The town has become a tourist stop from Hwy 58 and many of the shops and restaurants are thriving from it. Santa Margarita Ranch also operates zip line rides and ranch tours that originate from the center of town, where they are taken to the ranch in vans. The added traffic will slow them considerably, and I think will frustrate tourists to the point that they will not return. Santa Margarita's appeal is that it's a sleepy little town, but that appeal will be ruined forever with 100+ transfer trucks rumbling through it in an 8 hr period. It's hard sometimes to see children and even adult pedestrians crossing Hwy 58 inside town, and this will make for a very dangerous situation with drivers being frustrated behind so many slow trucks, they will easily look past the pedestrians, or worse, they may actually hit a child or adult crossing the road.

My wife has a tendency towards bronchitis and pneumonia and I have constant allergy issues that I medicate daily for. The added dust in the air will only worsen this. In addition, the increase of cases of Valley Fever that have occurred from the construction at the Topaz, and other, solar projects will likely be small compared to the increases from the additional blasting from a new quarry.

This quarry cannot be allowed to open.

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